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EDITORIAL COMMENT

With this, the Christmas issue, we wish our readers a happy holiday season. While we cannot but be thankful for the continued peace and prosperity of our own country, our joy will necessarily be over-shadowed by the warring conditions which exist in so great a part of the civilized world. Particularly to the women of our own profession in these countries, we extend our greetings and sympathy.

SPECIAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE ROBB MEMORIAL FUND

The committee of the Isabel Hampton Robb Memorial Fund has wisely decided to take prompt and energetic measures to complete without further delay the Fund which five years ago it undertook to establish on behalf of the nursing profession of the country. By the time this issue reaches our readers, circulars and appeals will have been sent forth by the committee, intended to reach into every hospital and training school and into all of the associations of nurses, great and small, through which the profession is represented. We bespeak from nurses everywhere, pupils and graduates, a cordial and hearty response to the appeal of the committee, and urge them to that kind of active and effective coöperation which nurses know so well how to give. The cause is one to which we have already and gladly pledged our loyalty.

The memory of her whom we would honor is deeply enshrined in our hearts; her work is a fresh and living influence in our training schools. Our associations, one and all, owe their inception and first impetus to her leadership, and their growth bears witness to all those early years of devoted effort which she gave for them. Our indebtedness to her is something that cannot now be measured, for as yet we are too close to her work to see it in its fulness. No better way could have been devised, however, of showing how truly we comprehend its

value and its significance than through this great educational Foundation.

The importance of the work which the Fund is designed to carry on stands out more and more distinctly as the years pass, and the need for improvement in the educational aspects of our work manifests itself in more directions and to a larger number of people. It is unquestionable that the work which nurses are doing is growing in importance all over the world. The demand is increasing for nurses capable of teaching in an effective way the needful things which people are waiting to learn. The public is asking this, public schools are requiring it, and insisting upon having nurses who can teach. Medical and sanitary knowledge is being carried over to the people, to mothers, children, families, more largely and more fruitfully through nurses, than through all the other sources put together. But no nurse can teach well what she does not fully understand. She must be in command of her subject and of the best methods of teaching if she is to make it live in the homes and habits of others. Nurses themselves are recognizing the inadequacy of their preparation for the newer things which are more and more being demanded of them, not only in the work of hospitals but in all of the varying departments of public health activities. As colleges and special schools are providing facilities for further preparation, nurses are making inquiry in regard to scholarships and other means of obtaining such advantages as are being offered. During the past three years, twelve nurses have been awarded Robb Fund scholarships, thus being aided in obtaining one year of special preparation for advanced administrative work, although the present income of the Fund is but a small fraction of what it eventually will be.

The amount of the Fund at the present time is something over \$15,000, an average of \$3,000 a year for the five years of its growth; the Fund will be completed when it has reached the sum of \$50,000. The development of this Fund should be distinctly the interest of every nurse in the country who is ambitious to have her profession reach its highest development and of every hospital which desires to have its nursing more intelligently and efficiently done through the better trained teachers which these scholarships help to create. The Fund is a symbol of the ideals for which we are striving; it points the direction toward which we are constantly and steadily moving. The whole trend of civilization is for that moral and spiritual uplift which has for its object the making the world a better place for those who are to follow. The object of this great educational Fund is that the nurses who are to come after us shall have at their command opportunities and facilities which those of today have largely been denied.

The appeals for this Fund in the past have been made principally to the affiliated organizations of the American Nurses' Association and to individual nurses; the appeal which is now being issued is to all nurses everywhere and more especially to the pupils in training, who are being urged to contribute by classes in such amounts as they can afford, no sum too small and no amount too large. The aim of the committee is to make one strong effort to complete the sum of \$50,000 and then to close the Fund for all time. The amount to be raised, \$35,000, may seem a large one, but when we remember that there are 26,000 members in the American Nurses' Association and approximately 30,000 pupils in our schools, it becomes a perfectly reasonable and possible task, provided the appeal can be made to reach, through the superintendents of the schools and the officers of the associations, the rank and file of our membership. The task is a glorious one. Let us bend ourselves to its accomplishment, realizing fully that our Fund can be completed if every nurse will but give what she can, no matter how little.

EDITH CAVELL—FURTHER INFORMATION

Some of our subscribers were doubtless disappointed at the delay in the receipt of their November JOURNAL, but this was due to our holding up the printing of the magazine to insert Miss Scovil's account of Edith Cavell. Since the publication of that article, we have learned from the *British Journal of Nursing*, of October 23, something more of Miss Cavell's professional life than Miss Scovil was able to obtain at the time of the preparation of her paper.

Miss Cavell was trained at the great London Hospital, entering this school in 1896, doing five years of private nursing and holding two important executive positions in English hospitals, before she was appointed, something more than eight years ago, matron of the new nursing school in Belgium, the *École Belge d'Infirmières Diplômées*. It will be remembered by some of our readers that she attended the International Council of Nurses in London in 1909 and presented a paper on Nursing in Belgium. Concerning her work there, the *British Journal of Nursing* states:

In 1909 . . . this school, founded to improve the training of nurses, to open a new career to Belgian girls, and to train new aids to the cause of science, had 13 pupils, for whom a varied and practical three years' curriculum had been arranged. By 1912 it had passed the experimental stage, and had 32 pupils training in four different hospitals, each with its trained matron, and a trained nurse in each ward. Miss Cavell still held the position of matron of the school when the war broke out. A Red Cross ambulance was immediately started by the Committee, who equipped a number of beds in neighboring houses for the wounded

of all nationalities. Her nursing staff was to have been distributed among these houses, together with many English and Belgian ladies who had offered themselves in a subordinate capacity, but after the entry of the Germans into Brussels, Miss Cavell put herself and her staff wholly at the disposal of the authorities. She could, had she wished, have left Brussels with the party of British nurses who, owing to the good offices of the American Consul, were eventually allowed to return, with an armed guard, as far as the frontier, by way of Denmark, but refused to do so. After the enemy's occupation of Brussels, she and her staff worked hard and cheerfully among wounded German officers in the Royal Palace.

The accompanying photograph of Miss Cavell is reproduced from the *British Journal of Nursing* of this same issue.

Miss Cavell was executed on October 12, and on the 29th of the same month, a memorial service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral which was attended by representatives of the King and Queen and by many government officials. Already movements are on foot for the establishment of three distinct memorials to Miss Cavell: a statue, from funds raised by the *Daily Telegraph*; a nursing college in Brussels, as suggested by the *British Journal*; and a fund toward building the new nurses' home at the London Hospital, which Queen Alexandra has asked to have named the Edith Cavell Home, rather than the Alexandra Home, subscriptions to be sent to the *Daily Mirror*.

The penalty which Miss Cavell paid by her death is the same, we suppose, as would have been meted out to a man under similar conditions and we may all glory in the fact that she met her death with the same courage and fortitude that the world expects from its great soldiers.

STATE MEETINGS

Reports that are being received in this office from meetings held in many states show a growing development in those associations, as evidenced by the large attendance and enthusiastic conventions. Valuable papers which have been read at a number of state meetings will be given place in this JOURNAL during the winter.

The New York State meeting, held in October, was perhaps the largest and most impressive gathering of nurses which the association has had since its pioneer days. The programme, taken as a whole, was exceptionally fine and one of the encouraging features was the fact that, with one or two exceptions, the officers of the association and the authors of the papers presented belong to the group of younger women who are just becoming known in organization work. It has been an inspiration to us to find this same kind of progress in meetings on the two extreme borders of the country, that of the Washington State Association, which we attended in the spring, and that of New York, so recently. We be-



EDITH CAVELL

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lieve the state associations, which are bringing together large groups of people whom we do not see at the national conventions, are becoming more and more the real centers of education.

RETURN OF THE RED CROSS UNITS

As groups of Red Cross nurses are returning to their home centers, they are receiving a welcome from their associates which is being expressed in various ways, by receptions, or dinners or meetings, where they are giving accounts of their experiences. As pretty a dinner as we have ever attended was given by the nurses of our own city to two of the five representatives of the Rochester Red Cross band. One hundred nurses, representing all the schools of the city, were present and listened eagerly to the addresses of those returning from the hospitals in England at Haslar and Paignton. These speakers had not been near the firing line, but their description of the English hospital equipment, methods of transferring the wounded from the battle fields, the character of the wounds and their effect upon the patients nervously, made it all most realistic when described by nurses who had actually taken part in this work. The dinner served the double purpose of bringing together a larger number of nurses than is usually found in any meeting of the nursing organizations of the city and of giving a warm welcome to those who had represented Rochester in foreign service. The ingenuity with which the emblem of the Red Cross was used in the table decorations and even in the garnishing of the dishes, provided a novel and pleasing effect.

THE CENTRAL CLUB FOR NURSES IN NEW YORK

The ceremony of laying the corner stone of the new club house for nurses by the Young Women's Christian Association took place on November 17, with appropriate ceremonies. Inclosed in the box to be placed in the corner stone were a copy of the November issue of the **AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING**, a history of the formation of the Club, a list of its charter members, coins of the year, an authorized edition of the Bible, and a list of the officers of the Young Women's Christian Association.

It is expected that the building will be finished by another fall and that the Central Club, maintained by the New York County Nurses' Association, will be located there.

PROGRESS OF STATE REGISTRATION

The Alabama bill for state registration which was approved by the Governor on August 6, is published in full in this JOURNAL and it will be seen that the State Nurses' Association submits to the Governor a list of physicians and nurses in good standing from which three physicians and two nurses are to be selected to constitute the Board of Examiners. Other terms of the bill are much the same as in a number of other states.

Another bill, subsequently introduced by Mr. Lee of the Public Health Committee, the text of which is also given, prohibits white female nurses from nursing in wards or rooms of hospitals, public or private, in which negro men are placed for treatment. This was vigorously opposed by members of the State Nurses' Association who suggested an amendment which would have given white women supervision over colored nurses and orderlies, but this was lost. They were unable to influence either the legislators or the Governor.

To those of us who have cared for colored patients in hospital wards, this seems a very arbitrary ruling. The reason given for such legislation was that the colored wards in some of the southern hospitals are not respectable places for white women, but the legislators seem to be blind to the fact that the fault for such conditions lies in the administration of the institution and is not the fault of either the white nurses or the colored patients.

MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The policy of the directors of the American Nurses' Association at their October meetings was to postpone until January the discussion of some important questions and to invite all the state presidents to meet with them then for conference, especially upon the contemplated changes in the by-laws which, according to the plans submitted, would mean a reorganization of the plan of representation for our conventions. The growing recognition of the state associations as the important educational units of our system makes the attendance of the state presidents very important. We understand that there is some feeling that New York is not a sufficiently central place for such a conference, but it is now too late in the year to change the place of meeting for all the boards and committees. The advisability of holding these conferences in different parts of the country would be a point for discussion before the new by-laws are adopted.